



# Advance Program Notes

Sankai Juku

UMUSUNA

Monday, November 9, 2015, 7:30 PM

These Advance Program Notes are provided online for our patrons who like to read about performances ahead of time. Printed programs will be provided to patrons at the performances. Programs are subject to change.

## Sankai Juku UMUSUNA *Memories Before History*

Choreography, concept, and direction  
Ushio Amagatsu

Music by  
Takashi Kako, Yas-Kas, and Yoichiro Yoshikawa

Dancers  
Ushio Amagatsu, Semimaru, Sho Takeuchi, Akihito Ichihara, Ichiro Hasegawa, Dai Matsuoka, Norihito Ishii, and Shunsuke Momoki

Co-produced by  
Biennale de la Danse/Opéra National de Lyon; Theatre de la Ville Paris, France; Kitakyushu Performing Arts Center, Fukuoka Pref. Japan; and Sankai Juku, Tokyo.

Production Management  
Pomegranate Arts  
Linda Brumbach, founder and president

*Sankai Juku's 2015 North American tour is supported by the Agency for Cultural Affairs of the Government of Japan, Shiseido Co., Ltd, and Toyota Motor Corporation.*

*This presentation of UMUSUNA is supported by the Japan Foundation through the Performing Arts JAPAN program and made possible by the New England Foundation for the Arts' National Dance Project, with lead funding from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, with additional support from the National Endowment for the Arts.*



JAPAN FOUNDATION



# *Sankai Juku*

## **ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, CHOREOGRAPHY, AND DESIGN**

Ushio Amagatsu

## **MUSIC**

Takashi Kako

Yas-Kas

Yoichiro Yoshikawa

## **DANCERS**

Ushio Amagatsu, *founder*

Semimaru, *since 1975*

Sho Takeuchi, *since 1987*

Akihito Ichihara, *since 1997*

Ichiro Hasegawa, *since 2004*

Dai Matsuoka, *since 2005*

Norihito Ishii, *since 2010*

Shunsuke Momoki, *since 2011*

## **STAGE MANAGER**

Kazuhiko Nakahara

## **LIGHTING (WORLD PREMIERE)**

Genta Iwamura

## **LIGHTING TECHNICIAN**

Satoru Suzuki

## **SOUND TECHNICIANS**

Akira Aikawa and Junko Miyazaki

## **SET TECHNICIAN**

Tsubasa Yamashita

## **COSTUME REALIZATION**

Masayo Iizuka

## **ADMINISTRATION**

Midori Okuyama and Yasuko Takai

## **PRODUCTION MANAGEMENT**

Doug Witney

## **NORTH AMERICAN COMPANY MANAGER**

Pat Kirby

# *Program*

## **UMUSUNA**

### ***Memories Before History***

*UMUSUNA* is a very old word, originating from ancient Japan, that has the same root as *ubusuna* (one's place of birth). *Ubusu* means birth, the beginning of life, or entering the world. The word *umusuna* also embodies the concepts of everything and nothing, existence and nothingness. *Na* evokes the land, the ground/soil, and one's native place.

*I Atokata: Imprints*

*II All that is born*

*III Memories from water*

*IV In winds blown to the far distance*

*V Mirror of forests*

*VI Sedimentation and erosion, ad infinitum*

*VII Ubusu*

# Biography

## USHIO AMAGATSU

Born in Yokosuka, Japan in 1949, Amagatsu founded Sankai Juku in 1975. He created *Amagatsu Sho* (1977), *Kinkan Shonen* (1978), and *Sholiba* (1979) before the first world tour in 1980. Since 1981, France and Théâtre de la Ville, Paris have become his places for creation and work, and this year he created *Bakki* for Festival d'Avignon. At Théâtre de la Ville, Paris, he created successively *Jomon Sho* (1982), *Netsu no Katachi* (1984), *Unetsu* (1986), *Shijima* (1988), *Omote* (1991), *Yuragi* (1993), *Hiyomeki* (1995), *Hibiki* (1998), *Kagemi* (2000), *Utsuri* (2003), *Toki* (2005), *Tobari* (2008), *Kara · Mi* (2010), *Umusuna* (2012), and *Meguri* (2015).

Amagatsu also works independently outside of Sankai Juku. In 1988 he created *Fushi* on the invitation of Jacob's Pillow Foundation in the U.S., with music by Philip Glass. In 1989, he was appointed the artistic director of the Spiral Hall in Tokyo, where he directed *Apocalypse* (1989) and *Fifth-V* (1990). In February 1997, he directed *Bluebeard's Castle* by Bartok, conducted by Peter Eötvös, at Tokyo International Forum. In March 1998, at Opéra National de Lyon, France, he directed Peter Eötvös's opera *Three Sisters* (world premiere), which received "Prix du Syndicat National de la Critique, France." *Three Sisters* has been seen in the 2001-2002 season at Théâtre du Châtelet in Paris and at Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie in Brussels, Opéra National de Lyon, and Wiener Festwochen 2002 in Austria. In March 2008, Amagatsu directed *Lady Sarashina*, Peter Eötvös's opera at Opéra National de Lyon (world premiere). *Lady Sarashina* again received "Prix du Syndicat National de la Critique, France" and it was seen at Opéra Comique in February 2009.

Amagatsu has also presided over the Jury of the International Meeting of Dance of Bagnolet in 1992, and he was awarded the "Chevalier de l'Ordre de l'Art et des Lettres" by the French Cultural Ministry this year. In February 2002 *Hibiki* won the 26<sup>th</sup> Laurence Olivier Award for Best New Dance Production. In 2004 the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology awarded the Geijyutsu Sensho Prize (Art Encouragement Prize) to Amagatsu for his outstanding artistic achievement. In 2007 *Toki* won the Grand Prix of the 6<sup>th</sup> Asahi Performing Arts Awards, and Sankai Juku received the KIRIN Special Grant for Dance. In July 2011 he presided over the Jury of the 10<sup>th</sup> International Choreographic Competition of National Academy of Dance Grand Theater, Italy. In 2011 he received the Purple Ribbon Medal of the Japanese government. In October 2013 Sankai Juku received the Japan Foundation Award. In July 2014 he received the "Commandeur de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres" of the Ministry of Culture and Communication of France.

His latest book, *Des Rivages D'Enfance au Buto de Sankai Juku*, was published in 2013 in France. It was published in 2015 in Japan as the special version, combining another book, *Dialogue avec la Gracite*, and adding a chapter of essays and drawings.

# *About Sankai Juku*

Sankai Juku is a Butoh dance company founded by Ushio Amagatsu in 1975. The company has premiered a new piece approximately once every two years at Théâtre de la Ville, Paris, a center for contemporary dance. Sankai Juku is one of the few dance companies that Théâtre de la Ville, Paris has commissioned continuously for 35 years.

Ushio Amagatsu, artistic director, trained in both classical and modern dance before he became immersed in Butoh. For Amagatsu, Butoh expresses the language of the body. In the 1970s, Amagatsu drew mostly on his own individual experience for inspiration. During the 1980s he spent most of his time working in Europe, and the inspiration for his work became more universal. In his works, Amagatsu presents an abstract vision of the infinite and explores evolutionary movement. Major themes that he examines are the relationship of the body to gravity and the relationship between gravity, the earth, and the environment.

In 1980, Sankai Juku was invited to perform in Europe for the first time. The company went to the Nancy International Festival in France with the firm conviction that Butoh would be accepted. This engagement marked a major turning point and made a name for both Sankai Juku and the term Butoh throughout Europe. The company has toured internationally since 1980 and performed in over 700 cities in 45 countries throughout Europe, Asia, Oceania, and the Americas. They have been highly praised in different cultures for over 35 years, which is a testament to the universal nature of Sankai Juku's work. While crossing over geographic borders and appealing to diverse audiences, the company has been developing the themes of their work while searching for and moving towards new realms. Sankai Juku received the Japan Foundation Award in 2013.

For more information, please visit [www.sankaijuku.com](http://www.sankaijuku.com).

## **FUNDAMENTAL THEME OF SANKAI JUKU'S WORK**

All of Sankai Juku's work has been directed, choreographed and designed by Ushio Amagatsu, the founder of the company. Amagatsu sees Butoh as a "dialogue with gravity." Using this as a starting point, he has developed his own method of pursuing themes that are universal to all human beings, such as birth and death. Amagatsu's work has been recognized internationally for its originality and utilization of the language of the body, the universal nature of the themes and the aesthetic strength of the expression.

"Dance is composed of tension and relaxation of gravity, just like the principle of life and its process. An unborn baby who is floating inside mother's womb faces to the tension of the gravity as soon as s/he is born. The baby is just lying down in the beginning, and then started to crawl, stand with two feet, and then with one foot... That is why the dance is born with tension and relaxation."

—Ushio Amagatsu, *Vogue Hommes* (1998-1999)

"I have a vision that always exists inside of me, that is, two plates searching for a balance on the both ends of the scales by rotating and moving up and down. One plate carries culture, each of which has its own unique characteristic that might often appear mysterious and difficult to understand to the others. However, the difference is the basis of the culture, and thus is important. The other plate carries universality that is common to all human beings. The difference and commonness are constantly moving for seeking a balance between two."

—Ushio Amagatsu, *Dialogue avec la Gravité* in ACTES

# ***Pomegranate Arts*** (*North American Tour Producer*)

Pomegranate Arts is an independent production company dedicated to the development of international contemporary performing arts projects. Since its inception, Pomegranate Arts has conceived, produced, or represented projects by Philip Glass, Laurie Anderson, London's Improbable Theatre, Sankai Juku, Dan Zanes, Lucinda Childs, and Goran Bregovic. Special projects include the revival of Robert Wilson, Philip Glass, and Lucinda Childs' Olivier Award-winning production of *Einstein on the Beach*; *Dracula: The Music and Film* with Philip Glass and the Kronos Quartet; the music theatre work *Shockheaded Peter*; Brazilian vocalist Virginia Rodrigues; Drama Desk Award-winning Charlie Victor Romeo; *Healing The Divide, A Concert for Peace and Reconciliation*, presented by Philip Glass and Richard Gere; and Hal Willner's *Came So Far For Beauty, An Evening Of Leonard Cohen Songs*. Current and upcoming projects include the international tour of *Available Light* by John Adams, Lucinda Childs, and Frank Gehry; Taylor Mac's *A 24-Decade History of Popular Music*; and a new work in development by Lucinda Childs, Philip Glass, and James Turrell.

## **POMEGRANATE ARTS**

Producer

<b>Founder and President</b>	Linda Brumbach
<b>Managing Director, Creative</b>	Alisa E. Regas
<b>Managing Director, Operations</b>	Kaleb Kilkenny
<b>Associate General Manager</b>	Linsey Bostwick
<b>Company Management Associate</b>	Katie Ichtertz
<b>Office Manager</b>	Eva Amessé

*Special thanks to Kyoko Yoshida*

# *In the Galleries*

## **BEYOND REAL: STILL LIFE IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY**

September 3–November 15, 2015

*Miles C. Horton Jr. Gallery, Sherwood Payne Quillen '71 Reception Gallery*

## **ARTIST SPOTLIGHT: DAVID HALLIDAY**

Halliday's photographic still lifes draw attention to the overlap between everyday life and art in simple, elegant arrangements of ordinary food and kitchen items. He carefully composes each image like a painting, paying close attention to texture, balance, and color. Influenced by Renaissance still lifes and artists such as Caravaggio (1571–1610) and Paul Cezanne (1839–1906), as well as his own culinary experiences, Halliday brings a sense of grandeur and beauty to life's unadorned objects.

Halliday lives and works in New Orleans, Louisiana, and Hudson, New York. Born in New York, he studied photojournalism at Syracuse University before putting photography on hold to work in restaurant kitchens in Manhattan and the French Quarter. Over the last two decades his work has been shown in a number of solo and group shows in galleries from Louisiana to Texas, New York, and California.

Also on view:

## **PHILIP TAAFFE**

September 3–November 15, 2015

Ruth C. Horton Gallery

## **GALLERY HOURS**

Tuesday–Friday, 10:00 a.m.–6:00 p.m.; Saturday–Sunday, 10:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.; closed for Virginia Tech home football games